

Response dated 11/22/2005  
Final Office Action dated 09/22/2005

Application No. 09/834,264

### **REMARKS**

The Final Office Action of September 22, 2005 has been reviewed and the comments therein were carefully considered. Claims 1-13 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1-13 stand rejected over U.S. Patent No. 5,987,508 ("Agraharam"). The Applicant has amended claim 4. No new matter has been introduced into the application. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims based on the following remarks.

#### **Telephone Interview of October 27, 2005**

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for participating in the telephone interview of October 27, 2005. During the interview, the Examiner and the Applicant's representative discussed the distinctions between the cited reference Agraharam and the present claims. The Examiner agreed to reconsider these distinctions if submitted in a formal response. The Applicant further explains the distinctions discussed during the interview below.

#### **Claim Amendments**

The Applicant has amended claim 4, however no new matter has been introduced into the application.

#### **Rejections under 35 USC §102**

Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Agraharam. The Applicant respectfully continues to traverse the rejection for the reasons set forth below.

Agraharam describes a system wherein "a recipient of an e-mail message [can] receive e-mail messages through an alias e-mail address which is directly associated with the recipient's

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telephone number." (Agraharam, Abstract). The recipient of the e-mail messages registers his phone number with a translation server, and when an e-mail message is addressed to an alias e-mail address (phone\_number@domain.com), the e-mail is routed to a translation server to perform a look up:

Once the recipient has registered with translation server 110, an e-mail message addressed to the alias address of that recipient is directed to translation server 110. For example, an e-mail message from a sender at client terminal 101 addressed to 2015558765@email.att.net is forwarded to translation server 110. Translation server 110, running a standard and well known Sendmail Daemon program, uses the telephone number address identity, 2015558765, to access database 117. Using that telephone number alias name, server 110 retrieves from database 117 the actual e-mail address associated with that telephone number and the Sendmail Daemon forwards the received e-mail message to that recipient's actual e-mail address. Thus, in the example the e-mail message addressed to 2015558765@email.att.net is forwarded by server 110 to its corresponding actual e-mail address of steveg@attmail.com.

(Agraharam, Col. 3, lines, 51-66).

The claims of the present application are patentably distinct from the system disclosed in Agraharam. For example, Agraharam does not disclose at least the steps of "receiving at a mail server an electronic mail message having a destination address" and "comparing the destination address to the main and at least one alias electronic mail addresses." Unlike the present claims, the system disclosed by Agraharam operates such that e-mail messages having a destination address equal to the alias address (phone number@domain.com) are sent to translation server 110. The Applicant respectfully submits that any interpretation of on the claimed "mail server" that is broad enough to be met by translation server 110 in Agraharam is inconsistent with how Agraharam describes translation server 110 and is improper. For example, the face of the Agraharam patent clearly shows a translation server 110 that is different from an e-mail server 103.

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When email messages are received at the translation server in Agraharam, the translation server performs a look-up of the actual email address based on the phone\_number contained in the alias address. This is the only operation that happens at the translation server in Agraharam. As stated above, claim 1 includes the features of "comparing the destination address to the main and at least one alias electronic mail addresses." There is no teaching or suggestion at all in Agraharam for using translation server 110 to compare the destination address to the actual email address. Moreover, the Office Action has provided no explanation of how such a comparison would be used. It is clear from the description provided by Agraharam that all email addressed to the "actual email address" is sent to email server 103 and not translation server 110. It remains unclear what would result from comparing a destination address to the actual email address. The function of translation server 110 is to retrieve the actual email address. Clearly translation server 110 would not compare the destination address to the actual email address so that the actual email address can be retrieved when the destination address matches the actual email address. Nothing is accomplished by this operation, which explains why it is not taught or suggested in Agraharam.

Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that Agraharam does not disclose "receiving at a mail server" and "comparing the destination address to the main and at least one alias electronic mail addresses." The translation server in Agraharam is fundamentally different from the claimed "mail server." And, at most the translation server in Agraharam compares a destination address to one other value, the alias address, and does not perform the operation of "comparing the destination address to the main and at least one alias electronic mail addresses."

Each of independent claims 1, 3, 10, and 12-13 contain a similar feature of "comparing the destination address to addresses included in a database of main and alias electronic mail

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addresses." Furthermore, each of independent claims 1, 10, and 13 contain a similar feature of "receiving at a mail server an electronic mail message having a destination address." As discussed above, Agraharam does not disclose, teach, or suggest these claimed features. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 3, 10, and 12-13 are in condition for allowance. Furthermore, because dependent claims 2, 4-9, and 11 all ultimately depend from the allowable independent claims, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 2, 4-9, and 11 are allowable.

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**CONCLUSION**

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a conversation with Applicant's representative would be useful in the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to call Applicant's representative.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 22, 2005

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